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COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL
AND CULTURAL RIGHTS
Pre-sessional working group
17-21 May 1999

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

List of issues to be taken up in connection with the consideration of the second periodic report of Jordan (E/1990/6/Add.17) concerning the rights referred to in articles 1 to 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. In the light of the Committee's decision to give effect to its follow-up procedure in the framework of the consideration of reports, the Committee would appreciate receiving information from the Government of Jordan on the specific measures it has adopted to implement the recommendations contained in the concluding observations adopted by the Committee with respect to Jordan's initial report.

2. Please indicate what the Government's position is on the recommendation of the World Conference on Human Rights concerning the preparation of an optional protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

II. ISSUES RELATING TO GENERAL PROVISIONS OF THE COVENANT (arts. 1-5)

Article 2 (2), Non-discrimination

3. Please indicate the legislative, judicial and administrative measures being implemented in the country in order to protect the economic, social and cultural rights of ethnic and religious minorities and foreigners.

Article 3. Equal rights of men and women

4. Please elaborate on the progress achieved in realizing the principle of equal enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights by men and women in Jordan, in the legislative and administrative fields and in other aspects of society.

III. ISSUES RELATING TO SPECIFIC PROVISIONS OF THE COVENANT (arts. 6-15)

Article 6. The right to work

5. Please indicate what is meant by the stipulation that "compulsory employment shall not be imposed on anyone, except in exceptional cases ..." (paragraph 7 of the report). Please provide information on the extent to which article 23 of the Constitution is being effectively applied.

6. Please indicate the actual level of unemployment in the country and of its development, particularly in the aftermath of the Gulf war of 1991-1992. In addition, please provide relevant statistics, disaggregated by age, gender and economic sector.

Article 7. The right to just and favourable conditions of work

7. Please indicate the criteria by which the minimum wage is fixed in various sectors of the economy.

8. Please clarify the meaning of "average wages" in paragraph 22 of the report.

9. Please indicate the effectiveness of the protection of children against illegal employment practices, including those that are deleterious to their health.

Article 8. Trade union rights

10. Please specify what is meant by "groups", other than the "the armed forces and the police force", referred to in paragraph 36 of the report, which are "exempted from the application of the provisions of the Labour Act".

11. Please indicate to what extent foreign workers can participate in trade union activities.

Article 9. The right to social security

12. Please elaborate on the types of workers covered by old-age pensions and other forms of retirement benefits.

13. In this respect, please provide more information on the extent of social security coverage and the level of retirement benefits relative to the average wage.

14. Please provide more detailed information on the amendment to the Social Security Act referred to in paragraph 45 of the report, and indicate which loopholes it intends to address.

15. Please indicate the fundamental reasons for and objectives of the intended unification of pension legislation within the framework of social security referred to in paragraph 46 of the report.

16. Please provide more detailed information on the "National Assistance Fund", in particular with regard to its sources of revenue, the criteria for the allocation of its benefits, the groups of people who benefit from it, and the growth of these allocations.

17. Please indicate how the authorities propose to finance the measures to promote the development of a social security network listed in paragraph 96. How much progress has been made so far in this direction, particularly in the light of the difficulties cited in paragraph 97 of the report?

Article 10. Protection of the family, mothers and children

18. Please clarify the meaning of the term "legitimate cause" in article 2 of Personal Status Act No. 61, cited in paragraph 50 (b) of the report.

19. There is no information on divorce in the report. Please provide relevant information in this regard and in particular as to what protection is being accorded to divorced women and to their children.

20. Paragraph 53 of the report refers to monetary assistance being frequently granted to widows, divorcees and abandoned women, and particularly those with dependent children. Please give clarification as to the significance and frequency, or regularity, of these payments and as to the conditions for benefiting from them.

Article 11. The right to an adequate standard of living

21. Please provide information on the effects of the intervention of the Ministry of Supply (paragraph 59 of the report) on the determination of prices of essential food products, on the incomes of farmers and on their propensity to develop their production capacities.

22. Given the relatively high number of unoccupied dwellings (para. 64 (b)), please indicate the impact this situation has on rents and on the construction of new dwellings.

23. Please provide information on the proportion of the population still living as nomads and how they are able to gain from the benefits mentioned in paragraphs 55 to 74 of the report.

Article 12. The right to health

24. Please provide updated information on the percentage and major causes of mortality among children below the age of five.

25. Please give information on the measures being applied in order to protect the health of the inhabitants of rural areas, and in particular those who continue to live as nomads.

26. Please elaborate on the results of the Government's endeavours to include every Jordanian citizen under comprehensive health insurance.

27. Please indicate the measures being applied in order to protect the health of pregnant women.

28. Please provide information on the birth control policy of Jordan and on the methods employed to this end.

29. Please provide information on the incidence of sexually transmissible diseases such as HIV/AIDS and on the promotion of public awareness of their existence and their prevention.

Articles 13 and 14. The right to education

30. Please provide more detailed information on the development of primary education in urban and rural areas, including statistics disaggregated by gender.

31. Please provide information on what is being done in order to assure the education of nomadic children.

32. Please indicate what progress is being made with regard to the realization of adult education, referred to in paragraph 119 of the report.

33. Please elaborate on the freedom of religious education in Jordan in the light of the co-existence of minorities who belong to other confessions than Islam.

34. Please provide statistical information on the evolution of university education, including on the composition of the student population, disaggregated by gender.

35. Please indicate the conditions for access to higher education, particularly with respect to students from disadvantaged families.

Article 15. The right to take part in cultural life, to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and the protection of intellectual property rights

36. How does the Government implement the legislative acts outlined in paragraph 128 of the report, in order to preserve and promote the languages and cultures of minorities in Jordan?

37. Please provide information regarding the assistance and benefits given to facilitate access to cultural activities, particularly for students, elderly persons, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.